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(54) **SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR USE IN CERTIFYING INTERACTIONS WITH HOSTED SERVICES**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search**
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See application file for complete search history.

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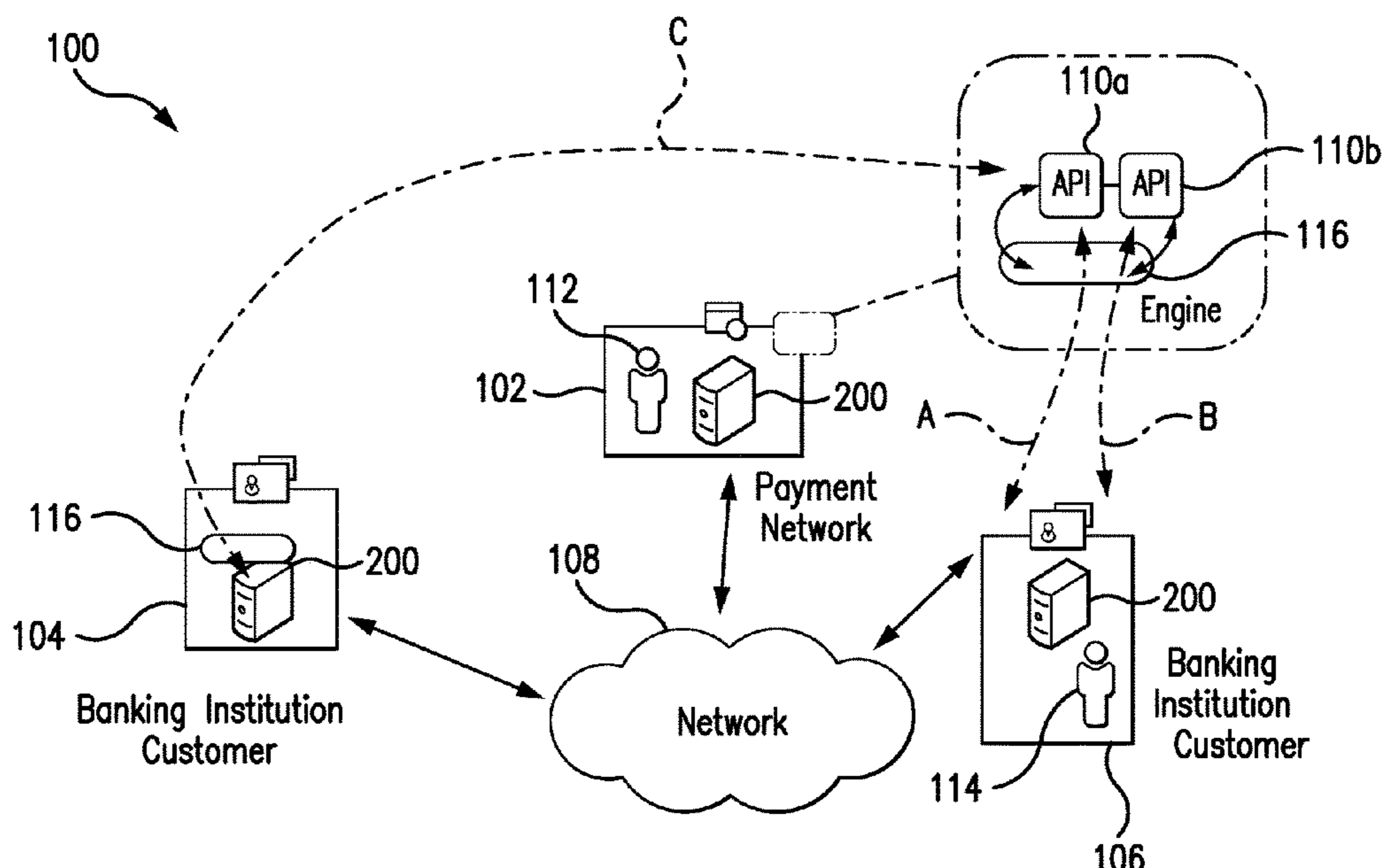
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Systems and methods are provided for validating customer use of application programming interfaces (APIs). An exemplary method includes selecting an API defining at least one service to be used by a customer and a standard associated with the API for data payloads directed to the API, and identifying the customer. The method also includes selecting at least one test case for the API and the customer, bundling the test case(s) into a test project for the customer, and transmitting the test project to the customer whereby the customer is able to execute the test project. The method further includes monitoring data payloads between the API and the customer and compiling a report indicative of a result of the test case(s) where the report indicates whether the data payloads are compliant with the standard associated with the API and whether the customer is certified to use the API, or not.

20 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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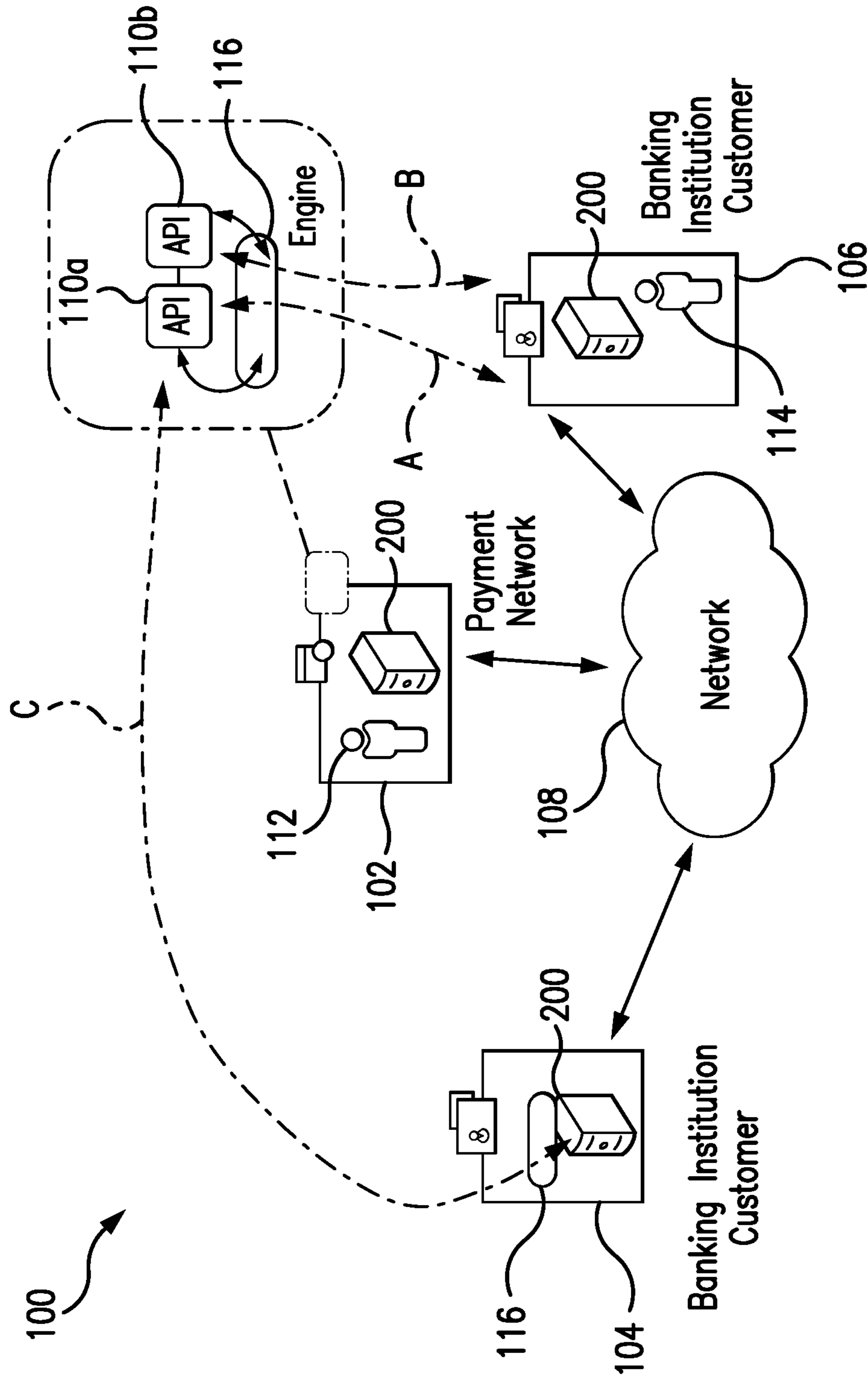


FIG. 1

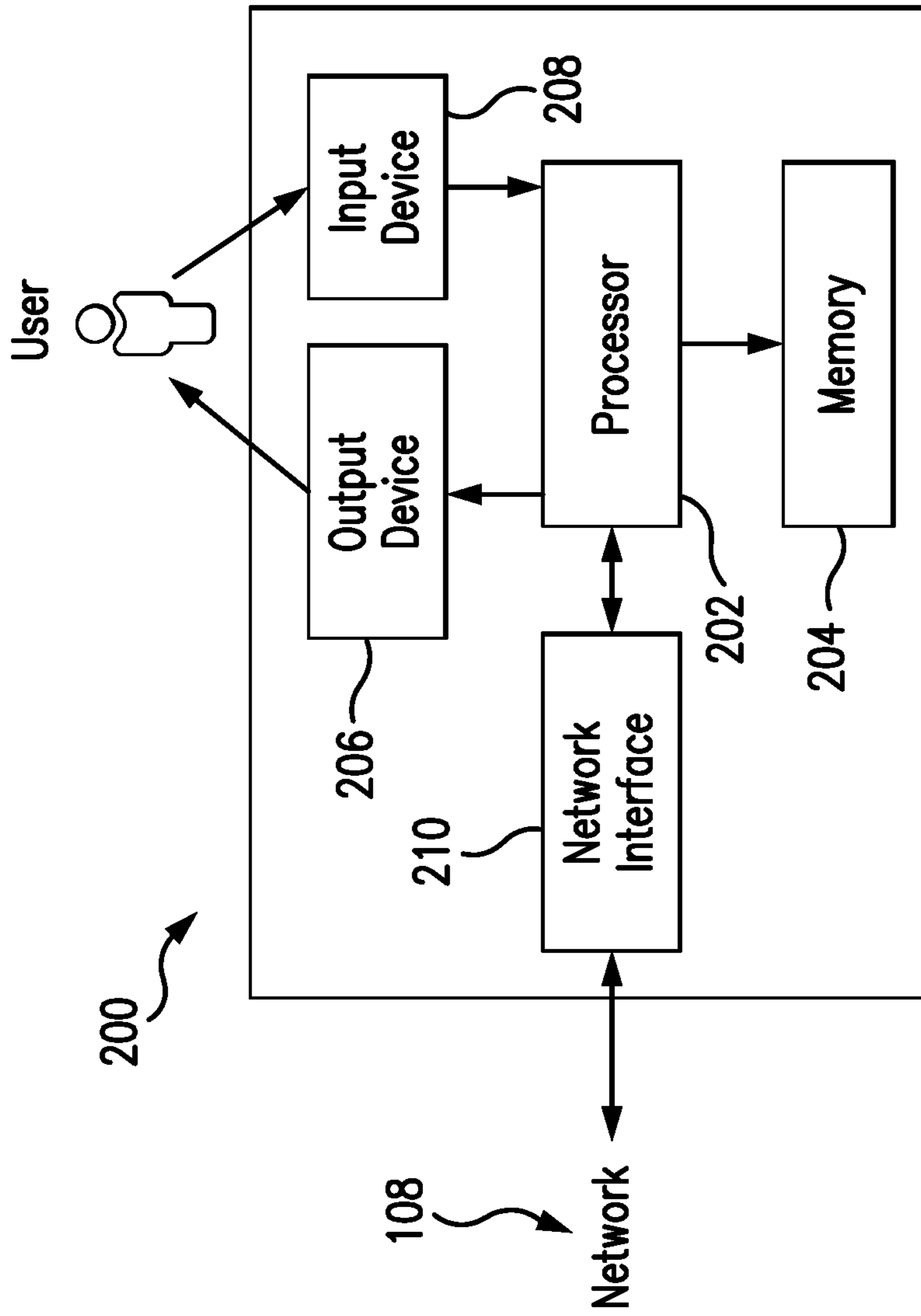


FIG. 2

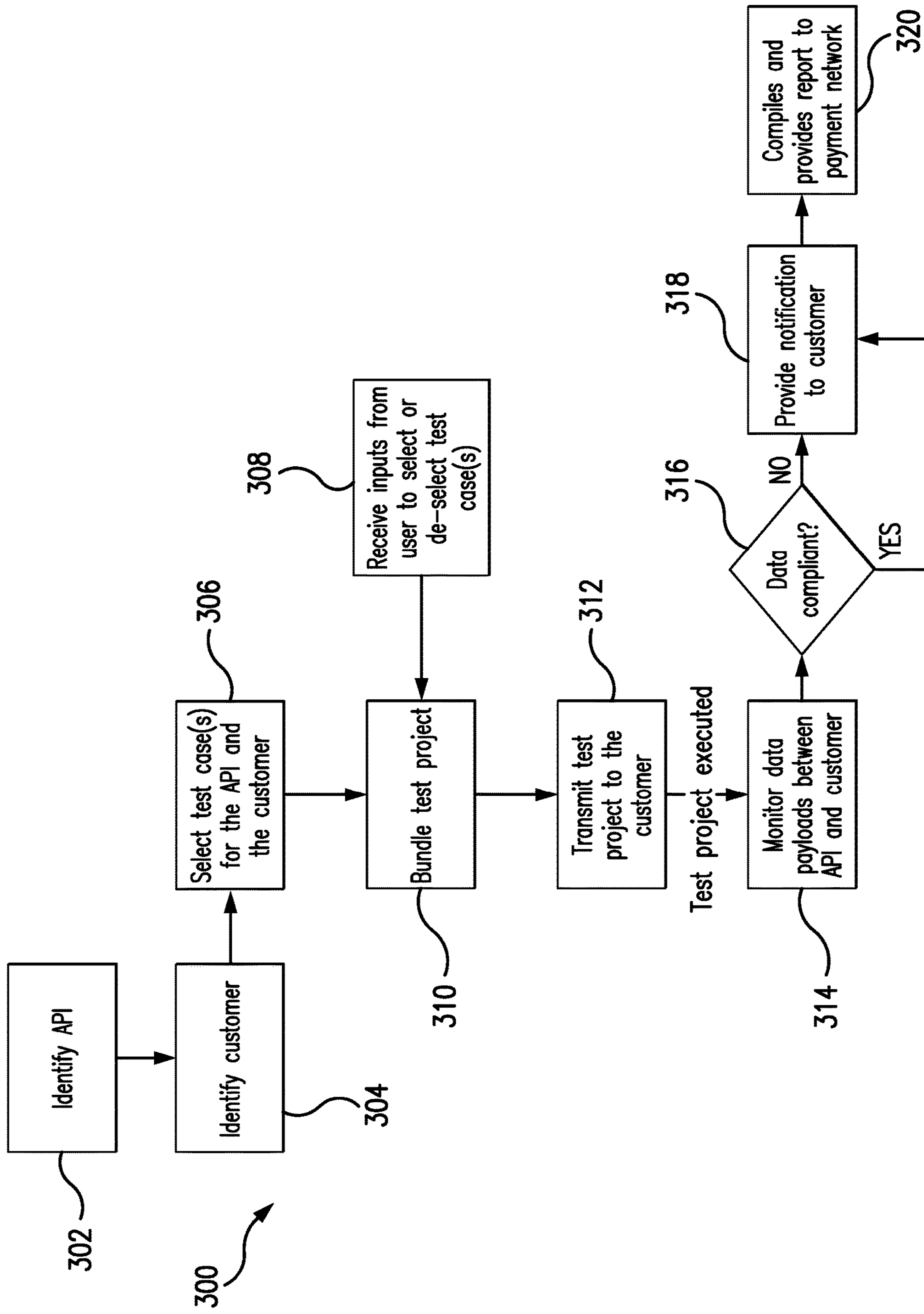


FIG. 3

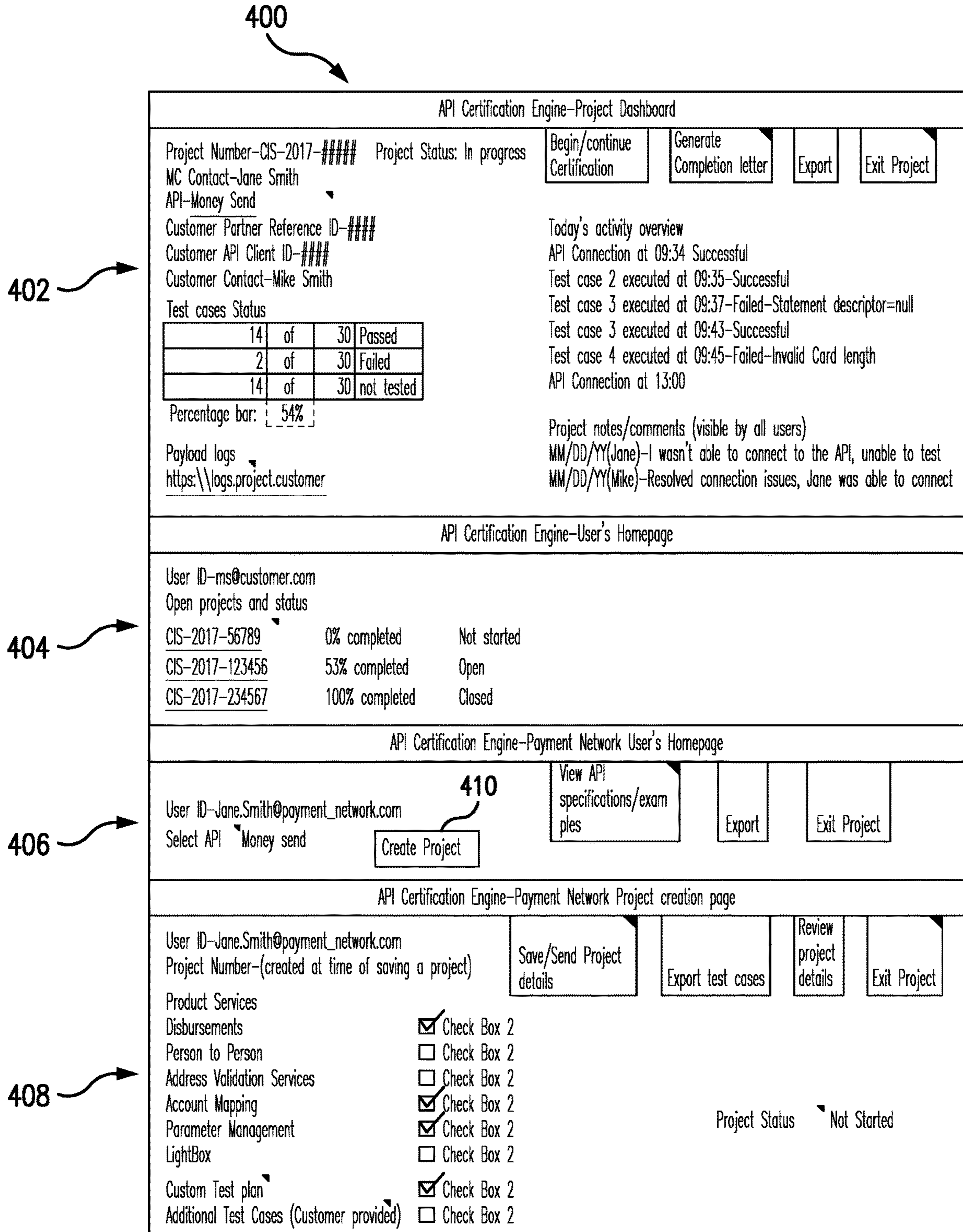


FIG. 4

1

**SYSTEMS AND METHODS FOR USE IN
CERTIFYING INTERACTIONS WITH
HOSTED SERVICES**

FIELD

The present disclosure generally relates to systems and methods for use in certifying interactions with hosted services, and in particular, to systems and methods for validating use of one or more application programming interfaces (APIs) (broadly, hosted services), by users, based on data payloads between the APIs and the users.

BACKGROUND

This section provides background information related to the present disclosure which is not necessarily prior art.

Different entities often provide services to other entities (or customers). The services may include physical services, in which the entities perform the services at a location associated with the customers. Alternatively, the services may include electronic services, whereby the electronic services may be performed at the customer locations or remote therefrom. When the services are performed remotely from the customers, the entities provide the electronic services through one or more different mechanisms, for example, one or more network-based mechanisms. An example of such a mechanism includes an application programming interface, or API. In connection therewith, the entity providing the API service (often referred to as a host) provides specific instructions to the customer so that the customer may interact with the API and receive intended benefits of the API service. Because errant interactions may cause issues not only for the customer but also for the host and/or other entities associated with the API service, in some instances the host may require that the customer be certified for use of the API service prior to the customer being granted full access thereto (e.g., via a production environment, etc.).

DRAWINGS

The drawings described herein are for illustrative purposes only of selected embodiments and not all possible implementations, and are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure.

FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary system for use in certifying interactions with one or more hosted services, and including one or more aspects of the present disclosure;

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of an exemplary computing device that may be used in the system of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is an exemplary method for use in certifying interactions with a hosted service, and which can be implemented via the system of FIG. 1; and

FIG. 4 illustrates an exemplary interface that may be used in the system of FIG. 1 and/or the method of FIG. 3 to provide interactions between customers and one or more hosted services.

Corresponding reference numerals indicate corresponding parts throughout the several views of the drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Exemplary embodiments will now be described more fully with reference to the accompanying drawings. The description and specific examples included herein are intended for purposes of illustration only and are not intended to limit the scope of the present disclosure.

2

Services may be provided to customers in various of manners, including, for example, through application programming interfaces, or APIs. When customers utilize APIs, the customers are typically instructed as to the proper interaction with (or use of) the APIs, so that services performed by the APIs are performed correctly and any resulting output is accurate/proper. When the APIs are misused, or used improperly, the underlying services may generate unexpected or incorrect data outputs. As such, entities providing the APIs, such as payment networks, etc., often require the customers to be certified in their use of the APIs prior to granting permission to the customers for full and/or unfettered use of the APIs. Uniquely, the systems and methods herein allow for validating and/or certifying customers in their use of one or more APIs, through monitoring of data payloads between the customers and the API(s). In particular, a certification engine is provided between a customer and an API (for example, hosted by a payment network), to monitor the data flow (or data payloads) between the customer and the API. In connection therewith, the certification engine provides a test project for the customer and the API, which includes one or more test cases. When the test case(s) is (are) performed, through interactions between the customer and the API, the certification engine monitors the data flow there between. Then, based on the data flow, the certification engine determines if corresponding data payloads are compliant with one or more standards associated with the API or are otherwise consistent with the expectancy of the test case(s), to thereby certify that the test case(s) is (are) completed, or not. The certification engine further provides real time or near real time feedback to the customer and/or the API host (e.g., the payment network, etc.) to promote efficiencies in the validation and/or certification of the customer for the API. In this manner, the API host may provide consistent and efficient certification of the customer for use of the API. Real time, for example, may include providing feedback to the customer and/or API host immediately after or within a few seconds of the user performing a test case (e.g., within about one second, within about three seconds, within about five seconds, within about ten seconds, within about thirty seconds, within about one minute, etc.), and near real time may include providing feedback to the customer and/or API host within a later time of the customer performing at test case, but still within about a minute, about two minutes, about five minutes, or about 30 minutes, etc.

FIG. 1 illustrates an exemplary system **100**, in which one or more aspects of the present disclosure may be implemented. Although parts of the system **100** are presented in one arrangement, other embodiments may include the same or different parts arranged otherwise, depending, for example, on applications and/or services involved therein, data warehouses available for access, etc.

The illustrated system **100** generally includes a payment network **102** and customers **104** and **106**, each coupled to network **108**. The network **108** may include, without limitation, one or more local area networks (LANs), wide area networks (WANs) (e.g., the Internet, etc.), mobile networks, virtual networks, other networks as described herein, and/or other suitable public and/or private networks capable of supporting communication among two or more of the illustrated parts, or even combinations thereof. In one example, the network **108** includes multiple networks, where different ones of the multiple networks are accessible to different ones of the illustrated components in FIG. 1. In particular, the payment network **102** and the customer **104** may be connected via a private network for processing transactions and,

separately, the payment network **102** may be connected to the customer **106** through a public network, such as the Internet.

Generally in the system **100**, the customers **104** and **106** are financial institutions, such as banks, which provide financial services related to banking, lending, insurance, investments, etc. The customers **104** and **106** may therefore rely on certain data from the payment network **102** to make business decisions or other decisions related to those financial services and/or to carry out financial transactions or processes related to the financial services that the customers **104** and **106** provide. The customers **104** and **106** may also rely on certain services offered by the payment network **102** to make such decisions and/or to carry out such financial transactions and processes. With that said, while the customers **104** and **106** are described as financial institutions herein, it should be appreciated that the customers **104** and **106** may include any type of entity, institution, person, etc., which may request and/or rely on data from, or services offered by, the payment network **102** (or another entity associated therewith, etc.). What's more, while described as implemented in the payment network **102**, the present disclosure should not be understood to be limited to the payment network **102**, or to payment networks in general, as other entities may be included in the system **100** in other system embodiments (such that the various features described herein with regard to the payment network **102** are also applicable to the other entities). With that said, in general, the present disclosure is applicable to entities that maintain data warehouses and provide reports from the data warehouses, either internally or externally, to customers thereof or other interested entities.

The payment network **102** of the illustrated system **100** generally includes multiple application programming interfaces (APIs), such as APIs **110a** and **110b**. Each of the APIs **110a** and **110b** is illustrated as being separate from the other one of the APIs **110a** and **110b**. However, it should be appreciated that the APIs **110a** and **110b** may be hosted by and/or present on the same computing device, or segregated to separate and/or multiple separate computing devices as desired. In addition, the APIs **110a** and **110b** are internal to the payment network **102** in this exemplary embodiment, while, in other embodiments, the APIs **110a** and **110b** may be external, in whole or in part, to the payment network **102**.

As part of its business and/or support of its customers **104** and **106**, for example, the payment network **102** may offer a number of operations and/or services to the customers **104** and **106**. The services may be made available to the customers **104** and **106** in one or more manners, including, specifically, through the APIs **110a** and **110b**. The services underlying the APIs **110a** and **110b** may be generally simple in nature, for example, the retrieval of or the check on specific data, or they may be more complex, for example, relating to a payment account transaction, etc. As an example, one or both of the APIs **110a** and **110b** may be associated with a service of providing rich information about a given merchant to one or both of the customers **104** and **106** (e.g., where one or both of the customers **104** and **106** may include an acquirer or issuer, etc.). As another example, one or both of the APIs **110a** and **110b** may provide a money send service to one or both of the customers **104** and **106**, whereby the customers **104** and **106** are permitted to send money, digitally, either domestically or cross-border. As yet another example, one or both of the APIs **110a** and **110b** may include a predictive, behavior-based fraud score service, which permits one or both of the customers **104** and **106** to determine whether or not to permit transactions to proceed

(e.g., where one or both of the customers **104** and **106** include an issuer of payment accounts, etc.).

In still further aspects of the present disclosure, one or both of the APIs **110a** and **110b** associated with the payment network **102** may be associated with (without limitation) services related to: commercial real estate and about offering insights to the monthly performance of retail locations to help evaluate acquisitions, optimize rents, and validate conclusions; accepting e-commerce and mobile commerce payments, regardless of payment brand; monitoring spending by transaction amount, transaction type (e.g., transactions involving point-of-sale (POS) devices, Internet transactions, etc.) and home country, and also to the temporary suspension of cards to prevent unauthorized use; cardholders for managing how, when and where their cards are being used by setting decline and alert rules (e.g., based on transaction amounts, transaction types, home countries, etc.) and personalized alerts; allowing addition of funds to eligible prepaid accounts; providing offers to account holders based on their payment account transactions to drive increased account usage and account holder engagement; multi-channel global payment processing; advanced fraud prevention and risk management solutions for merchants and financial institutions; moving funds between accounts and sending disbursements; developing cloud-based payment (CBP) (e.g., Mastercard CBP (MCBP)) applications; measuring impact of digital media campaigns on online and offline sales; providing tokenization of account numbers for increased payment security; identifying potentially high-risk merchants before entering into a merchant agreements; providing consumer-initiated mobile payment solutions that enable consumers to make convenient, secure payments for everyday purchases; providing simplified checkout experiences with digital wallets; accessing trend and sales data at industry and micro-sector levels; identifying payment cards that have been reported lost or stolen by issuers; providing global database access; providing predictive, behavior-based fraud score tools for e-commerce merchants; determining beneficial audiences for advertising in order to maximize the impact of ad marketing spend; and providing assurances that consumers are transacting digitally using genuine attributes; etc.

With that said, in general herein, the APIs **110a** and **110b** may be provided by the payment network **102** to perform various services and/or operations, as needed or desired, by the customers **104** and **106** (and/or by other customers in the system **100**). And, the services provided may include any suitable services and/or operations (e.g., any one or more of the services described above, other services, etc.).

With continued reference to FIG. 1, the payment network **102** includes a user **112** involved in providing permissions for and management and/or onboarding of one or more of the customers **104** and **106** for the APIs **110a** and **110b**. The user **112** may include, without limitation, an employee, a manager, etc. associated with the payment network **102**, or a contractor associated therewith. In addition herein, the customer **106** is associated with a user **114**, who may be, without limitation, an employee, a manager, etc., associated with integration, set up, and/or management of the customer's use of one or more of the APIs **110a** and **110b**, etc. Each of the users **112** and **114** is associated with a computing device **200** at the respective one of the payment network **102** and the customer **106**, and which will be described in more detail hereinafter.

The payment network **102** further includes a certification engine **116**, which is configured, by executable instructions, to operate as described herein. In general, prior to the

customers **104** and **106** using one or more of the APIs **110a** and **110b** in a production or live environment, the customers **104** and **106** are required, in this embodiment, to utilize and/or demonstrate use of the APIs **110a** and **110b** in a test environment. In connection therewith, the certification engine **116** is configured to provide the certification of the customers **104** and **106**, in the test environment, based, for example, on a test project and/or one or more test cases involving the APIs **110a** and **110b**.

In the illustrated embodiment, the certification engine **116** is provided as a standalone part of the payment network **102** (e.g., as a standalone computing device associated with the payment network **102**, etc.), and is partially located in communication with the payment network **102** and partially located at the customer **104**. However, in other embodiments of the system **100** the certification engine **116** may be included or incorporated in computing device **200** of the payment network **102** (fully or partially). What's more, in still other implementations of the present disclosure the certification engine **116** may be included (in whole or in part) with one or more of the APIs **110a** and **110b**, or with other applications, programs or services provided by and/or included in the payment network **102**, other entities of the system **100**, etc. (such that the certification engine **116** may then be associated with and/or incorporated in a computing device associated therewith).

In addition in the illustrated embodiment of FIG. 1, the certification engine **116** is generally configured to monitor data flow between customers **104** and **106** and APIs **110a** and **110b** based on logs for APIs **110a** and **110b** (e.g., by parsing the logs, etc.), which are accessible to the certification engine **116**. The logs may be accessible, for example, via a URL associated with the APIs **110a** and **110b** and/or associated logs (or in any other manner). In this embodiment, the logs for APIs **110a** and **110b** contain, for example, various details regarding the data flow between customers **104** and **106** and the APIs **110a** and **110b**, for example, relating to: the customer **104** or **106** (and/or the associated user **112** or **114**) making a request or call to the API **110a** or **110b**; a service and/or function associated with the API **110a** or **110b** being requested or called; the parameters passed for the given request or call associated with the API **110a** or **110b**; the results returned from the request or call; any errors associated with such request or call; timing (associated with any of the foregoing); etc. In connection therewith, the certification engine **116** may be located (logically or physically) entirely at the payment network **102**, or the certification engine **116** may be located in whole or in part at one or both of the customers **104** and **106** (remote from the payment network **102**) (such as in the illustrated embodiment where the certification engine **116** is located in part in association with the payment network **102** and in part at the customer **104**), or elsewhere. But regardless of location, as indicated above, the certification engine **116** is located so that it can examine data flow between customers **104** and **106** and APIs **110a** and **110b** based on logs for APIs **110a** and **110b**.

With that said, the certification engine **116** is generally configured, and disposed (logically or physically), between APIs **110a** and **110b** and the customers **104** and **106**, such that data flow between customers **104** and **106** and APIs **110a** and **110b** passes through the certification engine **116**, whereby the certification engine **116** is configured to monitor the data flow in real time (or near real time) as it is passed between customers **104** and **106** and APIs **110a** and **110b** (real time, for example, may include monitoring data flow between the customers and the APIs immediately as the data

flows, or within a few seconds of the data flowing, therebetween (e.g., within about one second, within about three seconds, within about five seconds, within about ten seconds, within about thirty seconds, within about one minute, etc.), and near real time may include monitoring data flow between the customers **104** and **106** and the APIs **110a** and **110b** within a later time of the data flow passing therebetween, but still within about a minute, about two minutes, about five minutes, or about 30 minutes, etc. In particular in FIG. 1, and as discussed above, the certification engine **116** is located at least partly at the payment network **102** and disposed generally between the APIs **110a** and **110b** and the customer **106**, such that the certification engine **116** may be configured so that data flowing between the customer **106** and the API **110a** (data flow A) and data flowing between the customer **106** and the API **110b** (data flow B) passes generally through the certification engine **116** associated with the payment network **102**. In addition in FIG. 1, the certification engine **116** is located at least partly at the customer **104** and disposed generally between the API **110a** and the customer **104**, such that the certification engine **116** may be configured to also have data flowing between the customer **104** and the API **110a** (data flow C) to pass generally through the certification engine **116**.

The certification engine **116** is also configured, in the illustrated embodiment, with one or more test cases for each of APIs **110a** and **110b**. The certification engine **116**, then, and as discussed in more detail below, is configured to monitor particular data passed between the customers **104** and **106** and the APIs **110a** and **110b** (e.g., parameters for a particular API request and/or a result returned by the API **110a** in response to that request, etc.), to identify data applicable to the test cases, and to determine whether the data passes or fails the test case.

In the illustrated embodiment, the certification engine **116** is generally configured to support any number of APIs and associated test cases. The certification engine **116** may, for example, be configured to allow the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** to create, at the certification engine **116**, a new API association by providing details associated with the new API (e.g., name, URL for the API and/or associated log, test case(s), standard specification, etc.). In this manner, the certification engine **116** may, for example, be configured to accept a file (e.g., formatted according to a standard test case template, etc.) specifying any number of test cases and to associate those test cases with the new API. In turn, the certification engine **116** may be configured to identify the test case(s) (and their details) in the file. The certification engine **116** may, for example, be configured to identify the test cases (and their details) in the file based on the file being formatted in accordance with a standard template (e.g., where a row for each test case includes a test case number in a first column, a test case summary in second column, and an expected result in a third column; etc.). The file may (or may not) include any additional information regarding the test cases or associated API, such as, for example, an identification of the API service to which the test cases pertains (e.g., disbursement services, person-to-person (P2P) services, and/or address validation services for the MasterCard Send API (broadly, a Money Send API), etc.) (e.g., in a fourth column, etc.). Exemplar test case entries for various services of Money Send API are shown below in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Test Case #	Test Case Summary	Expected Test Case Result	API Service
1	Transaction Amount exceeds transaction Limit (Payment Network 102)	Decline	Person to Person
2	Two transactions causing aggregate limit for a network to be exceeded (same network)	Decline second transaction	Person to Person
3	Invalid input format - Expiration date	Error	Person to Person
4	Successful transaction(Transaction routed through STAR)	Successful	Disbursements
5	Invalid Account - Card number is Invalid	Decline	Disbursements
6	Request Timeout scenario	System Error	Disbursements
7	Invalid card Type (Customer is only configured for debit but card provided is prepaid)	Decline	Disbursements
8	Account verification provided for valid card and address with 5 digit postal code	Successful Response with all fields matched	Address Verification
9	Account provided is eligible for payments.	Successful Response	Account Information

The certification engine **116** may be configured to additionally, or alternatively, accept manual input of test case information for the new API association from the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** (e.g., via free form fields soliciting the same or similar type of information specified in the standard template, etc.).

It should also be appreciated that, when configured with the new API association, the certification engine **116** may be configured to allow the user **112** associated with the payment

network **102** to specify whether custom test plans are allowed for test projects for the API (e.g., so that only a subset of the provided test cases may optionally be included in a test plan for the API, etc.) and/or whether customer-provided test cases are allowed to optionally include test projects for the API (e.g., in addition to the test cases identified in the file and/or manually input by the user **112**, etc.). In any event, regardless of whether the certification engine **116** accepts test case information via a file, manual entry, or in any other manner, the certification engine **116**, then, is configured to store the test cases (and their details), for example, in a data structure associated, at least in part, with the new API, etc. (e.g., in a same or similar format as a standard test case template, or another format), or in another manner. In connection therewith, the certification engine **116** may, for example, be configured to store the tests case(s) (and their details) in a data structure that has fields, for each test case, for the test case number, a test case summary, and an expected test case result, along with other information, such as, for example, "Parameter(s) to validate," where the "Parameter(s) to validate" corresponds to parameters to be passed by a customer to the API for validation by the certification engine **116** in association with a particular test case. In one example, where the API **110a** is the Money Send API discussed above and the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** has uploaded a test case file consistent with Table 1 above (e.g., in configuring the certification engine **116** to associate with API **110a**, etc.), the certification engine **116** may be configured to store the test cases (and their details) included therein in a data structure formatted consistently therewith. Exemplar formatting is show below in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Test Case #	Test Case Summary	Expected Test Case Result	API Service	Parameter(s) to validate
1	Transaction Amount exceeds transaction Limit (Payment Network 102)	Decline	Person to Person	
2	Two transactions causing aggregate limit for a network to be exceeded (same network)	Decline second transaction	Person to Person	
3	Invalid input format - Expiration date	Error	Person to Person	
4	Successful transaction(Transaction routed through STAR)	Successful	Disbursements	See Table 3
5	Invalid Account - Card number is Invalid	Decline	Disbursements	
6	Request Timeout scenario	System Error	Disbursements	
7	Invalid card Type (Customer is only configured for debit but card provided is prepaid)	Decline	Disbursements	
8	Account verification provided for valid card and address with 5 digit postal code	Successful	Address Verification	
9	Account provided is eligible for payments.	Successful Response	Account Information	See Table 4

It should be appreciated that the certification engine **116** may, in some embodiments, be configured to receive at least some information associated with test cases when being configured with a new API association, or at a different time. For example, with reference to Table 2, any applicable “Parameter(s) to validate” (e.g., for Test Case No. 4, the “Required” Parameters and associated requirements identified in Table 3, etc.) stored in the data structure may come from the test case file, or be manually entered, when a new API association is configured. Alternatively, any applicable “Parameter(s) to validate” may be received at another time (e.g., when a test project is created for a particular customer, etc.).

It should be appreciated that in the exemplary system **100** of FIG. 1, the certification engine **116** is configured with API associations for APIs **110a** and **110b**. For example, the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** has already created, at the certification engine **116**, a new API association for each of APIs **110a** and API **110b**, consistent with the above description. In connection therewith, the certification engine **116** is configured with test cases associated with APIs **110a** and **110b**. In one example, where API **110a** is the Money Send API discussed above, the certification engine **116** may be configured with a new connection for the Money Send API, where, for example, “Money Send” was specified as the name of the API and “paymentnetwork.com/api/moneysend/log” was specified as the URL for the API log, as well as with a test case file consistent with Table 1 above.

In operation of the system **100**, when the customer **106**, for example, determines that it desires and/or needs to utilize API **110a** (to implement or otherwise utilize one or more services associated therewith), the customer **106** may begin an integration process, whereby the customer **106** (and specifically, the user **114** associated therewith) modifies and/or builds out its computing device **200** to push data to the API **110a** (e.g., as part of a call(s) or request(s) to the API **110a**, etc.) and receive data from the API **110a** (e.g., a result(s) returned from the API **110a** in response to the call or request, etc.) (e.g., in both cases, via data flow A in FIG. 1, etc.). In connection therewith, the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** may interact with the certification engine **116** to create a test project for the API **110a** and the customer **106**. Specifically, the user **112** may identify the API **110a** and the customer **106** to the certification engine **116**. In response, the certification engine **116** is configured to select one or more test cases (e.g., as part of the test project, etc.) to be employed to certify the customer’s interaction(s) with the API **110a**.

In embodiments, the certification engine **116** may be configured to automatically select all test cases associated with one or more particular service(s) offered by API **110a** (e.g., all test cases associated with Disbursement services, Person-to-Person (P2P) services, and/or Address Validation Services, etc.). Alternatively, the certification engine **116** may be configured to automatically select only a subset of the test cases associated with one or more services, depending on, for example, default preferences (e.g., default customer **106** or user preferences set by user **112** when a new connection with API **110a** was configured, etc.) or characteristics associated the customer **106**. Once selected, the certification engine **116** may be configured to provide the user **112** an option to select additional test cases, to de-select one or more of the test cases selected by the certification engine **116** (e.g., to potentially allow the user **112** to customize certification of the customer **106** to particular services associated with the API **110a**, etc.). The certification engine **116** may also be configured to provide the user **112** with an option to provide additional test cases (e.g., provided

by the customer **106**) (e.g., via uploading a file or free form fields (consistent with the above description), etc.).

Then, in the system **100**, once the desired test case(s) is (are) selected (or de-selected), the certification engine **116** is configured to bundle the test case(s) as a test project and to transmit the test project to the customer **106**, for example, via at least a link to the test project (e.g., as included in an email, etc.), etc.

In response, the user **114** associated with the customer **106** may interact with the certification engine **116**, view the test project, and configure its computing device **200** to interact with the API **110a** based on the test project. For example, when the test project is transmitted to the customer **106** (and in particular the user **114**) via a link in an email, and when the link is executed, the certification engine **116** is configured to initially invite the user **114** to create a user profile (if the user **114** is a new user) or associate the test case with an existing user profile for the user **114**, and then to provide the user **114** with the test cases bundled with that test project under that profile. The user **114** is able to access, and leave, when desired, the user profile. In addition, the certification engine **116** may be further configured to present to the user **114** an overview of the test project and/or the API **110a**, a listing and/or description of one or more of the particular test cases for the API **110a** to be tested, and a functionality of the API **110a** being certified by the test cases (and test project). The certification engine **116** may be configured to present this information as part of the user’s interaction with the certification engine **116**, or separate therefrom (e.g., as a PDF, etc.). In connection therewith, broadly, the user **114** ultimately, or generally, executes the test project for the API **110a** in accordance with the bundled test cases. The user profile may be associated with multiple test projects, thereby potentially allowing the user **114** to have, and monitor, test cases or projects in progress for multiple test projects and/or APIs at one or more times.

The certification engine **116**, in turn, is configured to monitor data flow passing between the API **110a** and the customer **106** (e.g., consistent with the above) (and specifically, data associated with each of the test case(s) for the test project). The certification engine **116**, then, is further configured to determine whether the monitored data flow is in compliance with a standard specification of the API **110a**, based on the expected result for one or more test cases bundled in the test project, and potentially, based on any parameters to validate for those test cases. In this manner, where the data returned by the API **110a** to the customer **106** includes results associated with a particular test case, the certification engine **116** is configured to compare the returned result to the expected test case result associated with the particular test case (e.g., from API logs or data flow therebetween, etc.). For example, for a specific API, such as where API **110a** is the Money Send API, the expected test case result for Test Case No. 4 referenced in Table 2 is “Successful.” If the user **114** associated with customer **106** executes Test Case No. 4 in a manner that yields a returned result from API **110a** indicating “Successful,” the certification engine **116** is configured to determine that customer **106** passes Test Case No. 4, subject to the outcome of any parameter(s) validation for Test Case No. 4. It should be appreciated that the certification engine **116** may be configured to determine that data returned by the API **110a** to the customer **106** includes a result associated with a particular test case by, for example (and without limitation), parsing

11

(e.g., in a log for API 110a) the monitored data flow (e.g., for results returned by the API 110a to the customer 106 in response to specific requests or calls to the API that are associated with each bundled test case, etc.). In this regard, for each test case in the test project, the certification engine 116 may, for example, be configured with information corresponding to each API 110a request or call (and response thereto) associated with the test case (e.g., so that the certification engine 116 may compare the parsed data in the log for the API 110a with such information in order to determine whether the parsed data corresponds to a particular test case, etc.).

Where the data passed by the customer 106 to the API 110a includes parameters associated with a particular test case, the certification engine 116 is further configured to compare these parameters to any parameters to validate associated with the test case. For example, for a specific API,

12

Case No. 4 referenced in Table 2, and, thus, that the data is not compliant with the standard. It should be appreciated that the certification engine 116 may be configured to determine that data passed by the customer 106 to the API 110a includes a parameter(s) associated with a particular test case by, for example (and without limitation), parsing (e.g., in a log for API 110a, etc.) the monitored data flow (e.g., for requests or calls made by the customer 106 to the API 110a that are associated with each bundled test case, etc.). In this regard, for each test case in the test project, the certification engine 116 may, for example, be configured with information corresponding to each API 110a request or call associated with the test case (e.g., so that the certification engine 116 may compare the parsed data in the log for API 110a with such information in order to determine whether the parsed data corresponds to a particular test case, etc.).

TABLE 3

Parameter	Required	Example
payment_disbursement	Optional	
Contains the details of the request message.		
payment_disbursement.disbursement_reference	Required	DEF123456
This is a client-specific identifier for the disbursement. It must be unique within the client's domain. Allowable characters are alphanumeric and the *,_- ~ characters. Details- 6-40		
payment_disbursement.amount	Required	1000
The amount to be paid to the recipient in the smallest unit of the currency. Example: 100 = \$1.00 (assuming USD). Details- numeric, 1-999999999999		
payment_disbursement.currency	Required	USD
The currency of the disbursement amount as an ISO 4217 alpha-3 currency code, in uppercase. Details- alpha, 3		
payment_disbursement.recipient.first_name	Required	Jane
Recipient's first name is required for non-tokenized transactions. Details- 1-40		
payment_disbursement.recipient.middle_name	Optional	Tyler
Recipient's middle name. Details- 1-40		
payment_disbursement.recipient.last_name	Required	Smith
Recipient's last name is required for non-tokenized transactions. Details- 1-40		
payment_disbursement.recipient_account_uri	Required	acct-ref: ABCD123456789
URI identifying recipient's account to receive the disbursement funds. Only a pan based account is valid. Valid Values- Refer 'Account URIs'		

such as where the API 110a is, again, the Money Send API discussed above, a portion of the standard specification for the API involving a Money Send request is provided in Table 3 below. As shown, the Money Send request is required to include certain parameters, each of which is associated with a required designation indicating whether the parameter is required or optional, associated requirements (e.g., for the "payment_disbursement.currency" parameter, that currency is specified as an ISO 4217 alpha-3 currency code, in upper case, etc.), and, in some cases, an example that provides the format of the parameter. As such, if an API Money Send request (e.g., associated with Test Case No. 4 referenced in Table 2, etc.) does not include, for example, an appropriate disbursement currency (e.g., a disbursement currency specified as an ISO 4217 alpha-3 currency code, in upper case, etc.) within the data passed by the customer 106 to the API 110a for the request, the certification engine 116 is configured to determine that the API Money Send request fails Test

In addition, as a further example, Table 2 includes another portion of the standard specification for the example Money Send API, discussed above, for an Account Information service request from the Money Send API. As shown, and as above, the Account Information request is required to include certain parameters, each of which is associated with a required designation indicating whether the parameter is required or optional, associated requirements (e.g., for the "partnerID" parameter, that partner ID is specified as a 32 character string, etc.), and, in some cases, an example that provides the format of the parameter. As such, if an API Money Send request (e.g., associated with Test Case No. 9 referenced in Table 2, etc.) does not include, for example, an appropriate partner ID (e.g., a partner ID as a 32 character string, etc.) in the data passed by the customer 106 to the API 110a for the request, the certification engine 116 is configured to determine that the API Money Send request fails Test Case No. 9 referenced in Table 2, and, thus, that the data is not compliant with the standard.

TABLE 4

Parameter	Required	Example
partnerId	Required	
Path Param - Provider assigned partner id. Details - string, 32 fields	Optional	
Query Param - A comma-delimited, order independent list of one or more of the following values: metadata - return account metadata. Default value is equivalent to "fields = metadata". Details- Required		
account_info	Optional	See child attributes
Contains the details of the request message.		
account_info.account_uri	Required	pan: 5432123456789012; exp = 2017 February; cvc = 123
URI identifying account for which information is desired. Note: Using the Consumer Ref Account URI is not valid for this service. Only a card based account is valid. Valid Values- Refer 'Account URIs'		
account_info.amount	Optional	1000
Intended amount to transfer. This could give more accurate information. Details- Numeric, 1-999999999999		
account_info.currency	Optional	USD
The currency of the amount as an ISO 4217 alpha-3 currency code, in uppercase. Currency should be provided if amount is provided. Details- Conditional, alpha, 3		
account_info.payment_type	Optional	BDB
BDB: Business Disbursements, GDB: Government Disbursements, P2P: Person to Person, A2A: Account to Account, AMS: Acquirer Merchant Settlement, CBP: Credit Card Billpayment. Details- Conditional, This parameter should be defined during onboarding process. If multiple payment types are setup for a partner the right payment type corresponding to the request should be specified.		

Further, in this exemplary embodiment, the certification engine 116 is configured to provide notifications regarding test project status and/or test case results, at one or more regular or irregular intervals, or in real time (e.g., instantaneously, within milliseconds, etc.) or near real time (e.g., in a time frame resulting in no significant delays, etc.), to the user 112 and/or the user 114, at their respective computing device 200. In one embodiment, the certification engine 116 is configured to host a dashboard, for the customer 106, and specifically, for the user 114, whereby the certification engine 116 is configured to provide the notifications to the customer 106 via the dashboard.

Additionally, or alternatively, the certification engine 116 is configured to transmit notifications to the user 112, and the payment network 102, more generally. The notifications are provided to notify the user 112 of the status of the test project and/or specific test cases within the test project, etc. Such notifications may include, for example, indications that a test case was successfully executed (e.g., Test case #2 executed 09:35 MMDDYY—successful, etc.), or that a test case failed (e.g., Test case #3 executed 15:32 MMDDYY—fails (statement descriptor NULL), etc.), or relating to test case (or test project) connections (e.g., API connection at 09:15—Successful, API connection at 16:45—Ended, etc.). The certification engine 116 may be configured to provide the notifications, optionally, along with additional information about the test project (or other test projects) through a dashboard and/or other interface accessible to the user 114, via the user's profile with the certification engine 116.

While only one payment network 102, two customers 104 and 106, two APIs 110a and 110b, two users 114 and 112, and one certification engine 116 are illustrated in the system 100 in FIG. 1 (for ease of reference), it should be appreciated that the system 100, and/or other system embodiments of the present disclosure, may include multiple ones of one or more of these parts in various combinations (as well as one or more additional parts). For example, other system embodi-

ments may include multiple customers, and one or more of the multiple customers may include multiple users.

FIG. 2 illustrates an exemplary computing device 200 that can be used in the system 100. The computing device 200 may include, for example, one or more servers, workstations, personal computers, laptops, tablets, smartphones, other suitable computing devices, etc. In addition, the computing device 200 may include a single computing device, or it may include multiple computing devices located in close proximity, or multiple computing devices distributed over a geographic region, so long as the computing devices are specifically configured to function as described herein. In the exemplary embodiment of FIG. 1, each of the payment network 102 and the customers 104 and 106 are illustrated as including, or being implemented in, computing device 200, coupled to the network 108. In addition, the certification engine 116 may be considered a computing device, or may be considered implemented in a computing device, consistent with the computing device 200. With that said, the system 100 should not be considered to be limited to the computing device 200, as described below, as different computing devices and/or arrangements of computing devices may be used. In addition, different components and/or arrangements of components may be used in other computing devices.

Referring to FIG. 2, the exemplary computing device 200 includes a processor 202 and a memory 204 coupled to (and in communication with) the processor 202. The processor 202 may include one or more processing units (e.g., in a multi-core configuration, etc.). For example, the processor 202 may include, without limitation, a central processing unit (CPU), a microcontroller, a reduced instruction set computer (RISC) processor, an application specific integrated circuit (ASIC), a programmable logic device (PLD), a gate array, and/or any other circuit or processor capable of the functions described herein.

The memory 204, as described herein, is one or more devices that permit data, instructions, etc., to be stored

therein and retrieved therefrom. The memory **204** may include one or more computer-readable storage media, such as, without limitation, dynamic random access memory (DRAM), static random access memory (SRAM), read only memory (ROM), erasable programmable read only memory (EPROM), solid state devices, flash drives, CD-ROMs, thumb drives, floppy disks, tapes, hard disks, and/or any other type of volatile or nonvolatile physical or tangible computer-readable media. The memory **204** may be configured to store, without limitation, data specific to the service(s) provided by the APIs **110a** and **110b** (and other APIs), API associations, test cases, test projects, links to test projects, and/or other types of data (and/or data structures), etc. suitable for use as described herein. Furthermore, in various embodiments, computer-executable instructions may be stored in the memory **204** for execution by the processor **202** to cause the processor **202** to perform one or more of the functions described herein, such that the memory **204** is a physical, tangible, and non-transitory computer readable storage media. Such instructions often improve the efficiencies and/or performance of the processor **202** and/or other computer system components configured to perform one or more of the various operations herein. It should be appreciated that the memory **204** may include a variety of different memories, each implemented in one or more of the functions or processes described herein.

In the exemplary embodiment, the computing device **200** also includes an output device **206** that is coupled to (and that is in communication with) the processor **202**. The output device **206** outputs information such as test cases, result notifications, etc. in real time, or near real time, etc., (e.g., as defined by the test project, etc.), visually, for example, to the user **112** and/or the user **114** of a respective one of the computing devices **200**, etc. The output device **206** may include, without limitation, a liquid crystal display (LCD), a light-emitting diode (LED) display, an organic LED (OLED) display, an “electronic ink” display, speakers, etc. In some embodiments, the output device **206** may include multiple devices.

In addition, the computing device **200** includes an input device **208** that receives inputs from the user (i.e., user inputs) such as, for example, selections of test cases, etc. from the user **112**, as further described below. The input device **208** may include a single input device or multiple input devices. The input device **208** is coupled to (and is in communication with) the processor **202** and may include, for example, one or more of a keyboard, a pointing device, a mouse, a touch sensitive panel (e.g., a touch pad or a touch screen, etc.), another computing device, and/or an audio input device. Further, in various exemplary embodiments, a touch screen, such as that included in a tablet, a smartphone, or similar device, may behave as both the output device **206** and the input device **208**.

Further, the illustrated computing device **200** also includes a network interface **210** coupled to (and in communication with) the processor **202** and the memory **204**. The network interface **210** may include, without limitation, a wired network adapter, a wireless network adapter (e.g., a near field communication (NFC) adapter, a Bluetooth adapter, etc.), a mobile network adapter, or other device capable of communicating to one or more different networks, including the network **108**.

FIG. 3 illustrates an exemplary method **300** for validating interactions between one or more APIs and one or more customers. The exemplary method **300** is described (with reference to FIG. 1) as implemented in the certification engine **116** of the payment network **102**, in connection with

actions by the customer **106**, the user **112** and the user **114** (in the system **100**), and with further reference to the computing device **200**. As should be appreciated, however, the methods herein should not be understood to be limited to the exemplary system **100** or the exemplary computing device **200**, and the systems and the computing devices herein should not be understood to be limited to the exemplary method **300**.

In the method **300** (and without limitation), the customer **106** has developed and/or modified a tool for use by the customer **106**, which relies on at least one service of the API **110a**. As such, the customer **106** may request use of the API **110a** from the payment network **102**. In response in the method **300**, the payment network **102** requires the customer **106** to be certified for use of the API **110a**. In an attempt to achieve certification, from the payment network **102**, for use of the API **110a**, the customer **106** initially sets up a test environment, which provides intended interactions of the tool with the API **110a**.

Thereafter, upon the request for such certification, the user **112** associated with the payment network **102** selects and/or identifies the API **110a**, at **302**, and identifies the customer **106**, at **304**. Specifically, an interface may be displayed to the user **112**, at the computing device **200**, by the certification engine **116**, which permits the selection of the API **110a** and the identification of the customer **106**. The interface may include, for example, a webpage or other network-based interface provided from the certification engine **116**. The user **112** may be permitted to select the API **110a**, for example, from a dropdown menu of available APIs, or to select the API **110a** through typing or otherwise inputting an identifier associated with the API **110a** (e.g., a name of the API **110a**, etc.). In this manner, the certification engine **116** may permit the user **112** to select only a valid and/or known API. Likewise, the customer **106** may be identified, by the user **112**, from a dropdown menu, or by entry of a name or other identifier associated with and unique to the customer **106**. Again, in this manner, the certification engine **116** may permit the user **112** to identify only a valid and/or known customer. If either the API **110a** or the customer **106** is unknown, the certification engine **116** may display one or more different interfaces to register the API **110a** or the customer **106** to the certification engine **116**, whereby the user **112** would enter detail related to the API **110a** and/or the customer **106** to permit the certification engine **116** to operate as described herein.

Once the API **110a** is selected and the customer **106** is identified, the certification engine selects, at **306**, one or more test cases for a test project for the API **110a** and the customer **106**. The test cases may include, for example, any of Test Case Nos. 1-9 referenced in Table 2, etc.

In addition, via another interface provided by the certification engine **116** to the computing device **200**, the user **112** may select additional test cases for the test project, or de-select desired test cases presented by the certification engine **116**, at **308** (e.g., where the certification engine **116** selects Test Case Nos. 4-9 referenced in Table 2, the user **112** may select Test Cases No. 1-3 and de-select Test Case Nos. 5-6 referenced in Table 2; etc.). In connection therewith, the user **112** is able to provide inputs to the certification engine **116** for particular test cases and thereby customize the test project for the customer **106** (e.g., based on particular services requested by the customer **106**, based on the particular customer **106**, etc.). As another example, when the service requested by the customer **106** via the API **110a** relates to cloud-based payment (e.g., Mastercard CBP (MCBP), etc.) applications, the certification engine **116** may

select fifteen test cases (at **306**) based generally on the identified API **110a**. Thereafter, the user **112** may de-select one or more of the fifteen test cases based on, for example, the customer **106**, a specified use of the API **110a** by the customer **106** for the MCBP applications, a limitation on the use of the API **110a** for the customer **106**, etc. and/or further select additional test cases to add thereto for the same or different reasons.

Subsequently in the method **300**, the certification engine **116** bundles, at **310**, the selected test cases into the test project, taking into account any de-selected test cases, and transmits the test project to the customer **106**, at **312**. For example, the certification engine **116** may bundle and store the test project as specific to the API **110a** and the customer **106** in memory (e.g., the memory **204**, etc.) at the payment network **102**. In turn, the certification engine **116** then transmits the test project to the customer **106** (and more particularly to the user **114**), for example, as a link in an electronic message (e.g., an email message, an SMS message, etc.). With that said, when the customer **104** is involved in being certified to the API **110a**, with the certification engine **116** deployed at least partially at the customer **106**, the certification engine **116** operates in generally the same manner as above. However, in this implementation, the customer **104** then stores the test project in memory (e.g., the memory **204**, etc.) at the customer **104**.

In any case, when the customer **106** is ready to test and/or attempt to certify its interactions with the API **110a**, the customer **106** selects the test project (e.g., selects the link to the test project, etc.) and executes the test project in accordance with the bundled test cases. With the execution of the test project, the certification engine **116** monitors, at **314**, the data payloads (or data flows) exchanged between the API **110a** and the customer **106** (consistent with the monitoring process described above). As the exchanged data payloads are monitored (e.g., from associated logs, data traffic, etc.), the certification engine **116** determines, at **316**, for each payload or at one or more intervals, whether the data is associated with a bundled test case(s) and, if so, whether it is consistent with an expectancy for the test case(s) associated with API **110a**. Specifically, the certification engine **116** evaluates a payload of data passed from the customer **106** to the API **110a** (e.g., in a log associated with the API **110a**, etc.) to determine if one or more parameters therein are associated with a bundled test case(s), and if so, whether the parameters are consistent with the specification for the API **110a** (e.g., as shown in Table 3 for the Money Send API, etc.).

In addition, as part of such testing, the certification engine **116** also determines, for each payload of data passing back to the customer **106** from the API **110a**, whether the data includes a result(s) associated with a bundled test case(s) and, if so, whether it is consistent with an expectancy for a test case result(s) associated with the test case(s) for the API **110a**. Specifically, the certification engine **116** evaluates a payload of data passed from the API **110a** to the customer **106** to determine if one or more results therein are associated with a bundled test case(s), and if so, whether the results are consistent with the expected test case result(s) for the associated test case(s) (e.g., as shown in Table 2 for Test Case Nos. 1-9 for the Money Send API, etc.). It should be appreciated that the determination of each payload relative to parameters associated with the specification (and the test case) and/or expected result associated with the test case may vary depending on the test project (and test cases for that project) and API. Additional manual review, apart from the certification engine **116**, or through modification of the

test cases and/or test project in the certification engine **116**, may also be required in certain test projects for certain APIs, or not.

When the certification engine **116** determines that the data is consistent with the expectancy for the API **110a**, or not, the certification engine **116** provides appropriate notifications to the customer **106**, at **318**. For example, the customer **106**, and specifically the user **114**, may execute the test project through an interface provided from the certification engine **116** (e.g., a network-based interface, etc.), whereby the certification engine **116** is able to provide data to the interface, in real time or near real time, thereby giving the customer **106** specific and prompt feedback about its performance in interacting with the API **110a**. If, for example, a format of a data payload is incorrect, after that data payload is received by the certification engine **116** (as part of the monitoring), the certification engine **116** may provide a notification to the customer **106** of the incorrect payload as known to the user **114**, through the interface, for example, as a warning, a log entry, or other visual or audible cue, again in real time or near real time.

FIG. 4 illustrates an exemplary interface **400** including a dashboard that may be displayed, by the certification engine **116**, to the customer **106** (e.g., to the user **114** at computing device **200**, etc.) in connection with providing notifications to the customer **106** with regard to a test project and in connection with different interactions between the customer **106** and one or more APIs. As shown, the interface **400** includes a status segment **402** that relates to the test project, which includes a name of the test project (i.e., CIS-2017-#####); a project status (i.e., In Progress); an API name (i.e., Money Send); a status of test cases for the test project including a number passed, a number failed, and a number not tested; and various notifications about the test project. In connection therewith, the interface **400** identifies activity for the given day, including a listing of successful test cases, failed test cases, and connection times, etc. Further in the interface **400**, the user **114** is able to amend notes, whereby different users on a test project may communicate and/or document actions items or other updates and/or tasks related to the test project.

In addition, the interface **400** includes a user segment **404** specific to the user **114** (e.g., identified as Mike Smith having a User ID of MS@customer.com, etc.) and test projects associated with and/or accessible to the user **114** (e.g., CIS-2017-56789, CIS-2017-123456, etc.). Upon selection of the different test projects, the status segment **402** (described above) is repopulated with the information specific to the selected test project, thereby allowing the user **114** to navigate between the test projects. Further, the interface **400** includes segments **406** and **408** for the creation of new test projects, through which the user **114** is able to interact with the payment network **102** (as appropriate) and create new test projects by selecting, for example, the "Create Project" button **410**. In response to selecting button **410**, the certification engine **116** populates the segment **408** with options to be selected and/or entered for the new test project. It should be appreciated that despite the exemplary format, arrangement and appearance of the interface **400**, other interfaces, messages, and/or formats may be employed in other embodiments to provide notifications and/or other information related to a test project and/or API to one or more users.

Referring again to FIG. 3, finally, when the test case(s), or the test project, is complete, the certification engine **116** compiles and provides a report, at **320**, to the user **112**, or more generally, to the payment network **102**. When the

interactions between the API 110a and the customer 106 have satisfied the expectancy for the API 110a, the report may be a certification of the customer 106 for use of the API 110a, or may be used, by the user 112, to make a determination of certification for the same. If, however, the report shows inconsistency or incorrect data payloads, the report may be used, by the user 112, to direct correction by the customer 106 and/or deny certification until the test project is able to be executed without any notifications of inconsistency and/or incorrect data payloads.

In view of the above, the systems and methods herein provide certification of a customer's use of an API, whereby a certification engine, for example, monitors the data flow (or data payloads) between the customer and the API to determine if corresponding data payloads are compliant with one or more standards associated with the API, based on test cases associated with a test project. In this manner, when the payloads from the customer (or to the customer) include all required API data, parameters, and/or fields populated, and expected results, the customer may be certified to use the API, generally, without potentially evaluating the content of the data payloads. The systems and methods herein may further provide real time or near real time feedback to the customer and/or the API host (e.g., the payment network, etc.) through a dashboard interface, appropriate notifications, etc., thereby promoting efficiencies in the validation and/or certification of the customer for the API. As such, API hosts may provide consistent and efficient certification of the customer for use of the API.

Again, and as previously described, it should be appreciated that the functions described herein, in some embodiments, may be described in computer executable instructions stored on a computer-readable media, and executable by one or more processors. The computer-readable media is a non-transitory computer-readable storage medium. By way of example, and not limitation, such computer-readable media can include RAM, ROM, EEPROM, CD-ROM or other optical disk storage, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium that can be used to carry or store desired program code in the form of instructions or data structures and that can be accessed by a computer. Combinations of the above should also be included within the scope of computer-readable media.

It should also be appreciated that one or more aspects of the present disclosure transform a general-purpose computing device into a special-purpose computing device when configured to perform the functions, methods, and/or processes described herein.

As will be appreciated based on the foregoing specification, the above-described embodiments of the disclosure may be implemented using computer programming or engineering techniques including computer software, firmware, hardware or any combination or subset thereof, wherein the technical effect may be achieved by performing at least one of the following operations: (a) selecting an API, the API defining at least one service to be used by a customer and a standard associated with the API for data payloads directed to the API; (b) identifying the customer; (c) selecting, by at least one computing device, at least one test case for the API and the customer; (d) bundling, by the at least one computing device, the at least one test case into a test project for the customer; (e) transmitting, by the at least one computing device, the test project to the customer, whereby the customer is able to execute the test project; (f) monitoring, by the at least one computing device, data payloads between the API and the customer; and (g) compiling and transmitting, by the at least one computing device, a report indicative of

a result of the at least one test case, the report indicating whether the data payloads are compliant with the standard associated with the API, thereby indicating certification of the customer's use of the API to provide the at least one service, or not.

Exemplary embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough, and will fully convey the scope to those who are skilled in the art. Numerous specific details are set forth, such as examples of specific components, devices, and methods, to provide a thorough understanding of embodiments of the present disclosure. It will be apparent to those skilled in the art that specific details need not be employed, that example embodiments may be embodied in many different forms, and that neither should be construed to limit the scope of the disclosure. In some example embodiments, well-known processes, well-known device structures, and well-known technologies are not described in detail.

The terminology used herein is for the purpose of describing particular exemplary embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting. As used herein, the singular forms "a," "an," and "the" may be intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. The terms "comprises," "comprising," "including," and "having," are inclusive and therefore specify the presence of stated features, integers, steps, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, integers, steps, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof. The method steps, processes, and operations described herein are not to be construed as necessarily requiring their performance in the particular order discussed or illustrated, unless specifically identified as an order of performance. It is also to be understood that additional or alternative steps may be employed.

When a feature is referred to as being "on," "engaged to," "connected to," "coupled to," "associated with," "included with," or "in communication with" another feature, it may be directly on, engaged, connected, coupled, associated, included, or in communication to or with the other feature, or intervening features may be present. As used herein, the term "and/or" includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items.

Although the terms first, second, third, etc. may be used herein to describe various features, these features should not be limited by these terms. These terms may be only used to distinguish one feature from another. Terms such as "first," "second," and other numerical terms when used herein do not imply a sequence or order unless clearly indicated by the context. Thus, a first feature discussed herein could be termed a second feature without departing from the teachings of the example embodiments.

None of the elements recited in the claims are intended to be a means-plus-function element within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 112(f) unless an element is expressly recited using the phrase "means for," or in the case of a method claim using the phrases "operation for" or "step for."

The foregoing description of exemplary embodiments has been provided for purposes of illustration and description. It is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the disclosure. Individual elements or features of a particular embodiment are generally not limited to that particular embodiment, but, where applicable, are interchangeable and can be used in a selected embodiment, even if not specifically shown or described. The same may also be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the

21

disclosure, and all such modifications are intended to be included within the scope of the disclosure.

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method for use in validating customer use of one or more application programming interfaces (APIs), the method comprising:

receiving a request from a customer computing device associated with a customer relating to use of an API hosted by an API computing device, the API defining at least one service to be used by the customer and a standard associated with the API for data payloads directed to the API computing device, wherein the API computing device is separate from the customer computing device;

selecting the API from multiple different APIs and identifying the customer;

automatically selecting, by at least one computing device, at least one test case specific to the selected API for the identified customer;

bundling, by the at least one computing device, the at least one test case into a test project for the customer;

transmitting, by the at least one computing device, the test project to the customer computing device, whereby the customer computing device executes the test project on the selected API, via the API computing device, wherein the at least one computing device is separate from the customer computing device and the API computing device;

after transmitting the test project to the customer computing device, monitoring, by the at least one computing device, data payloads between the API computing device and the customer computing device; and

compiling and transmitting, by the at least one computing device, a report indicative of a result of the at least one test case based on the monitored data payloads, the report indicating whether the monitored data payloads are compliant with the standard associated with the selected API, thereby indicating certification of the customer's use of the selected API to provide the at least one service, or not.

2. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein selecting the at least one test case includes selecting a plurality of test cases for the API and the customer.

3. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein transmitting the test project to the customer computing device includes transmitting an electronic message including a link to the test project to the customer computing device.

4. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, further comprising providing a notification to the customer computing device regarding a status of the test project, via a dashboard interface available to the customer at the customer computing device.

5. The computer-implemented method of claim 4, wherein providing the notification includes providing the notification in real time, or near real time.

6. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the at least one test case includes multiple test cases; and

wherein the method further includes de-selecting one or more of the multiple test cases in response to an input from a user at the at least one computing device.

7. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, further comprising executing the test project in response to an input from the customer;

identifying ones of the monitored data payloads consistent with the at least one test case; and

22

determining whether the identified ones of the monitored data payloads are compliant with the standard associated with the API.

8. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein the customer includes a banking institution; wherein the API is hosted by a payment network; and wherein the at least one service relates to payment account transactions.

9. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, further comprising validating use of the selected API by the customer based on the monitored data payloads including results that are consistent with expected test case results.

10. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein monitoring the data payloads between the API and the customer computing device includes monitoring the data payloads based on a log for the API in real time, or near-real time.

11. The computer-implemented method of claim 1, wherein monitoring the data payloads between the API and the customer computing device includes monitoring the data payloads based on the data passing through the computing device in real time.

12. A non-transitory computer-readable storage media including executable instructions for validating customer use of one or more application programming interfaces (APIs), which when executed by at least one processor, cause the at least one processor to:

bundle multiple test cases into a test project for a customer computing device of a customer for an API hosted by an API computing device, in response to a request by the customer for services specific to the API, wherein the customer computing device is separate from the at least one processor and the API computing device;

in response to execution of at least one of the multiple test cases by the customer computing device, monitor data payloads between the API computing device and the customer computing device;

determine whether each data payload from the customer computing device to the API computing device conforms to a specification associated with the API, whereby the customer is able to be certified to the API when each data payload conforms to the specification; and

generate and transmit a notification when a data payload from the customer computing device fails to conform to a standard specification for the API.

13. The non-transitory computer-readable storage media of claim 12, wherein the executable instructions, when executed by the at least one processor, further cause the at least one processor to select the multiple test cases for the API based on the standard specification for the API.

14. The non-transitory computer-readable storage media of claim 13, wherein the executable instructions, when executed by the at least one processor, further cause the at least one processor to de-select one or more of the multiple test cases in response to an input from a user.

15. The non-transitory computer-readable storage media of claim 12, wherein the executable instructions, when executed by the at least one processor, further cause the at least one processor to provide the notification to a user.

16. The non-transitory computer-readable storage media of claim 12, wherein the executable instructions, when executed by the at least one processor, further cause the at least one processor to transmit the notification to the customer computing device, via a dashboard interface.

23

17. The non-transitory computer-readable storage media of claim 12, wherein the customer includes a banking institution;

wherein the API is hosted by a payment network; and
 wherein the at least one of the services specific to the API
 relates to payment account transactions.

18. A system for use in validating customer use of one or more application programming interfaces (APIs), the system comprising:

at least one processor configured to:

bundle multiple test cases into a test project for a customer computing device of a customer for an API hosted by an API computing device, wherein each of the multiple bundled test cases is associated with an expected test case result specific to use of the API, and wherein the customer computing device is separate from the at least one processor and the API computing device;

in response to execution of at least one of the multiple bundled test cases by the customer computing device, monitor data payloads between the API computing device and the customer computing device; determine whether each monitored data payload is associated with one of the multiple bundled cases; and

when one of the monitored data payloads is associated with one of the multiple bundled test cases, determine whether the one of the monitored data payloads conforms to a specification of the API, based on whether the one of the monitored data payloads includes a result returned from the API that is consistent with the expected test case result associated with the one of the multiple bundled test cases.

24

19. The system of claim 18, wherein at least one of the multiple bundled test cases is further associated with a parameter for validation; and

wherein the at least one processor is further configured to:

when the one of the monitored data payloads is associated with the one of the multiple bundled test cases and the one of the multiple bundled test cases is associated with a parameter for validation, determine whether the one of the monitored data payloads conforms to a specification associated with the API, based on whether the one of the monitored data payloads includes a result returned from the API that is consistent with the expected test case result associated with the one of the multiple bundled test cases; and/or

when the one of the monitored data payloads is associated with the one of the multiple bundled test cases and the one of the multiple bundled test cases is associated with a parameter for validation, determine whether the one of the monitored data payloads conforms to a specification associated with the API, based on whether the one of the monitored data payloads includes a parameter to the API that is consistent with the parameter for validation associated with the one of the multiple bundled test cases.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the at least one processor is configured to bundle the multiple test cases into the test project for the customer computing device for the API based on input from a user; and

wherein the input includes at least one of: the user selecting at least one of the multiple test cases, the user de-selecting at least one test case, and the user providing at least one of the multiple test cases.

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